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BUENA...

RIOS DEBUTS EXPANDED NEW BUFFALO LOCATION

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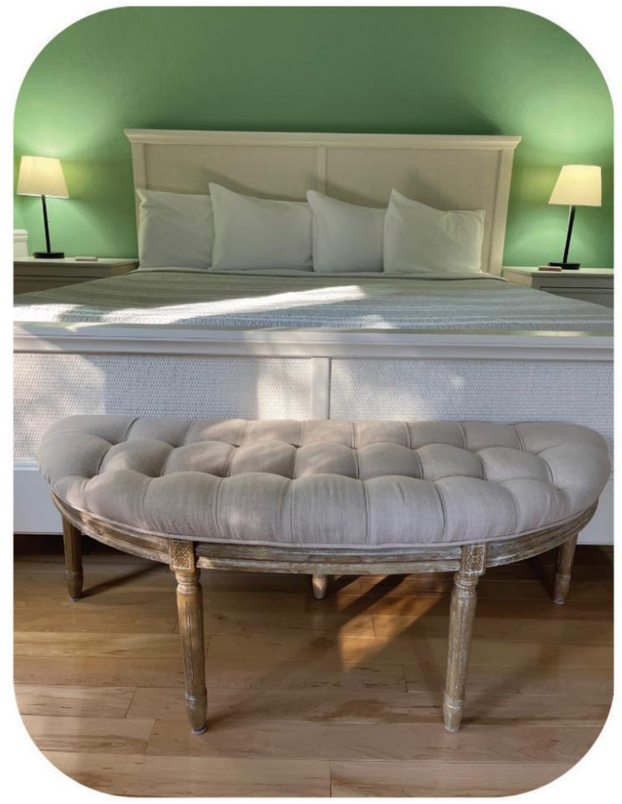
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New Buffalo Township preparing for 4/20 holiday

BY FRANCESCA SAGALA

New Buffalo Township is preparing for what's hoped to be a smoother 4/20 cannabis holiday this year.

At the New Buffalo Township Board's Monday, March 16, meeting, Berrien County Sheriff's Department Lt. Thad Chartrand said that he's been working with fire chief Jamie Flick regarding combatting potential traffic issues, which included acquiring the Plaza One parking lot, for next month's holiday.

As part of their consent agenda, board members approved a payment of $120 to Art and Image for temporary no parking signs. Chartrand said that they've received approval from the Berrien County Road Department to place the signs on Wilson Road for that weekend.

He added that nothing's come through for M-239 yet.

Chartrand said there will also be an extra deputy every day, from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Saturday, Sunday and Monday for additional enforcement.

"Our hope is that whatever major issues that were caused last year at Wilson and 239 will be resolved by getting all those cars to park in Plaza One parking lot," he said.

New Buffalo Township Supervisor Michelle Heit said that the township received its marijuana excise share, which was "slightly less than we anticipated" at $1,404, 444. The funds will go toward roads as well as the fire department.

Board members approved outdoor assembly permits from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. April 20 for Cookies and Kush E Mart.

Final approval for an SLU to operate an adult use marijuana retail establishment was approved for the following: Attitudes Wellness LLC at 19471 West U.S. 12 and New Buffalo Investments LLC at 10309 U.S. 12.

Board members approved the cost of outfitting a New Buffalo Township patrol vehicle for the Berrien County Sheriff's Office in an amount not to exceed $49,000.

Lt. Chartrand said that the only investment the township has is the equipment, such as lights, body camera and radar systems. The equipment will stay in the vehicle every time it gets updated or go into another one.

Regarding the sheriff's agreements with the contract townships, Chartrand said that "through the administrative fees that the townships can pay is that the sheriff's department purchases the vehicle and they pay for the maintenance and upkeep of that vehicle."

The following grant applications to The Pokagon Fund were approved: $7,500 for school supplies giveaway at Public Safety Day and $9,000 for half the cost of a lighted traffic sign trailer.

Heit said that the trailer, which is solar powered, can be used for the annual 5K and other traffic-related events. The township will also reach out to AEP for the rest of the funds, with the full cost being roughly $18,000.

Board members approved moving firefighter Emily Walters to full-time status starting April 5 at a pay rate of $25 per hour with full benefits.

An agreement with the Berrien County Road Department for road work on Shedd Road, Lakeshore Road, Holiday Drive, Marquette Drive and Oak Hills Spring Subdivision for $890,164.16, with the payment of 50 percent upfront, was approved. Heit said that Harbor Country Drive, which is a primary road and the county's responsibility, is included in this agreement and will be getting done this year.

A resolution stating the township's support for a regional transportation authority was adopted.

Two water sewer bond payments, one being $107,950 and the other $212,800, to U.S. Bank were approved.

A payment of two invoices totaling $101,148.46 to the Berrien County Road Department for the Marquette Greenway was approved.

The following parks department seasonal employees from May 1 to Oct. 1 were approved: Nicholas Wolf, Brody Nikkel and Brayden Ferguson at a pay rate of $15 per hour and Drew Bowen for $16 per hour.

Only in the art world can $114 in supplies turn into hundreds of millions. — *Dino N. Fatouros*

Local Government Meetings

New Buffalo Times

Democracy Requires Transparency

CITY OF NEW BUFFALO
VANCE PRICE, MAYOR
CITY COUNCIL
MARK ROBERTSON, ROGER LIJEWSKI, KAREN GEAR, RICH KNOLL, VANCE PRICE
City Council meets on the 3rd Monday of each month at 6:30PM
CITY OF NEW BUFFALO PLANNING COMMISSION MEETINGS
Meets on the 1st Tuesday of each month at 5:30PM
NEW BUFFALO TOWNSHIP BOARD
HOWARD MALES, MICHELLE HEIT, MICHELLE HANNON, PATTY IAZZETTO, BARBARA ANDERSON
Board meets on the 3rd Monday of each month at 4PM
NEW BUFFALO TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
Meets on the 1st Tuesday of each month at 6:30PM
SHERIFF BERRIEN COUNTY
Sheriff, Chuck Heit
Undersheriff, Greg Sanders
NEW BUFFALO AREA RECREATIONAL AUTHORITY
Meets at 9AM on the 2nd Wednesday of every other month (odd) at New Buffalo Township Hall, 17425 Red Arrow Highway New Buffalo
NEW BUFFALO AREA SCHOOLS BOARD
LISA WERNER, JOHN HASKINS, DENISE CHURCHILL, JENNIFER SUMMERS, VANESSA THUN, STEPHEN DONNELLY, GREG VOSBERG
The Board meets on the 2nd and 4th Mondays of each month at 6PM
CHIKAMING TOWNSHIP
CHIKAMING TOWNSHIP BOARD
DAVID BUNTE, PAULA DUDIAK, LIZ RETTIG, RICHARD SULLIVAN, ARTHUR ANDERSON
Chikaming Board meets on the 2nd Thursday of each month at 6:30PM
CHIKAMING TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
Meets on the 1st Wednesday of each month at 6:30PM
THREE OAKS
THREE OAKS TOWNSHIP BOARD
Meets on the 2nd Monday of each month at 7PM
VILLAGE OF THREE OAKS BOARD
Meets on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 7PM
GRAND BEACH
Meets on the 3rd Wednesday at 5PM EST
KIMBERLY WOLNIK, CLERK-TREASURER
HARRY WALDER, JACK GRACE, ED SEBASTIAN, PETER DOERR, EDWARD BRANDES
MICHIANA
VILLAGE OF MICHIANA COUNCIL
Meets on the 2nd Friday of each month at 1PM

City plans playground purchase, postpones paid parking

BY THERSE DONNELLY

Playground equipment at Oselka Park needs to be updated and the New Buffalo City Council used their March 16 meeting to approve potential funding sources for the work.

In two separate votes, the council passed resolutions to apply for grants from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) and Recreation Passport Grant,

City Manager Darwin Watson said the grants will both require the city to come up with matching funds for a percent of the grant. The city will apply for a $500,000 grant from the LWCF, which requires a 50 percent match, and $150,000 from the Recreation Passport, which requires a 25 percent match.

At their May 19, 2025, meeting, the council passed a resolution to establish paid parking in the downtown. Because the summer season was about to start, they postponed its implementation until 2026. After several follow-up meetings, the council came to a consensus to further postpone the new parking policy until 2027 but did not take formal action.

On Watson's recommendation, the council approved a resolution at their March 16 meeting to formally postpone the parking policy until April 1, 2027.

In addition to the playground grant applications, the council passed resolutions to request funds from the Congressional Directed Spending from U.S. Sen. Elissa Slotkin (D), U.S. Sen. Gary Peters (D) and U.S. Rep. Tim Walberg (R). Any funding the city receives from the CDS program will be used for the Mayhew Street and Clinton Street utility and roadway improvement project, as well as road improvements at the public beach. Watson said the idea is to install a roundabout to ease congestion entering the beach parking lot to ease traffic congestion. Currently, he said, the only direction to reroute overflow traffic is through Marquette Drive, which is a private street.

The council also approved a list of 2026 street projects Watson presented. The list includes sections of South Smith, South Bronson, South Kinzie, South Griffith, East Indiana, Bell and East Clay streets slated for milling and resurfacing.

Watson said these sections have no infrastructure underneath, which will allow the city to quickly fix the pavement. He said a series of streets with infrastructure will be repaired during water/sewer upgrades.

As required by the State of Michigan, the council approved budget amendments for the 2025-2026 fiscal year. Watson explained the State of Michigan Uniform Budgeting and Accounting Act requires municipalities make amendments to address variations from the approved budget.

Based on the recommendation of the Planning Commission at their March 3 meeting, the council approved two site plans for single-family residences- one at 126 N. Harrison and one at 405 E. Merchant St.

The Michigan Department of Transportation has informed Berrien County that, as of October 1, 2026, the Twin Cities Area Transportation Authority (TCATA) will no longer receive federal or state funding.

TCATA operates both Benton Harbor Dial-A-Ride and Niles Dial-A-Ride, providing public transportation for urban areas, while Berrien Bus serves rural areas.

MDOT has determined that TCATA does not provide service to enough urban areas to qualify as an urban service provider under funding guidelines.

Due to this, Berrien County is moving to dissolve TCATA and create a new countywide transit authority.

The New Buffalo City Council passed a resolution of support for the new Berrien County Regional Transit Authority.

Planned Unit Developments (PUD) require a more involved process than a typical construction application, Watson told the council, due to their complex, customized needs and multiple public hearings and extensive site plan reviews. Due to this, he recommended the council approve a fee adjustment to a $1,200 application fee and an escrow deposit not to exceed $5,000. Watson said this will ensure the costs of the PUD process are not assumed by taxpayers.

The council approved Kona Dunes Leasing, Inc.'s proposal for the beach concession through Dec. 31, 2027, with the State of Michigan as the alternative concession if a final agreement cannot be reached with Kona.

The council tabled a decision on a proposal from Tuscan Valley Landscaping to install native flowers and grasses in a piece of city property at the Amtrak platform on Oselka Drive.

Watson said the city is responsible for the maintenance of the land and city workers have found it difficult to mow due to the number of cars and people at the platform.

Councilmember Rich Knoll questioned the $9,897.65 expense, noting the area in question is roughly 15 feet long by five feet wide.

The council approved the lease purchase of a 2026 Dodge Durango with lights and sirens installed by La Porte Chrysler for $51,787. Police Chief Rich Killips said the police department has added more staff and needs an additional vehicle to accommodate the department's needs.

Watson added the department had money allocated for the purchase.

All human actions have one or more of these seven causes: chance, nature, compulsion, habit, reason, passion, and desire. — *Aristotle*

The council had a second reading to add Section 1-9 to Chapter 1 of the City Code of Ordinances. This addition will give the city the right to refuse to review or act on a request for a permit, site plan review, city contract or other matter if the applicant owes the city through unpaid property taxes or other debts. The city already has an ordinance that permits it to collect unpaid utility bills through property taxes.

The Planning Commission has requested the council take action regarding a commissioner missing three consecutive meetings. City bylaws and code of ordinances enable the council to have a public hearing to consider the removal of a commissioner who has not followed commission attendance policy.

The council scheduled the hearing for its April 20 meeting, though Watson said if the matter is resolved by the commission beforehand.

During public comment, several business owners addressed the council about private businesses holding events in the downtown during the summer months.

Restaurant owner Maria Cleveland said she doesn't typically see an increase in business during summer events and even noticed regulars often avoid coming to the downtown during larger events.

She suggested the city considered charging a higher fee for events during the summer months and lower in the off season to encourage year-round events.

Business owner Marc Danesi said some events in the downtown have blocked his building enough that he closed for the day. He said he also had concerns that event attendants entering his business carrying alcohol could jeopardize his own liquor license.

Danesi said he had been told street events are close to the businesses to ensure there is space for emergency vehicles down the middle of the street. He suggested if the space isn't large enough to safely accommodate an event, the event should be held elsewhere.

He also asked the council to look into if the clear path ordinance is being followed at the public parking lot at Whittaker and Buffalo streets

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Pedestrian path in Three Oaks Village moving forward

BY THERESE DONNELLY

Plans for a pedestrian path along a stretch of U.S. 12 within the village of Three Oaks will move forward after the Three Oaks Village Council approved preparation work for the project at their meeting Wednesday, March 11.

Village Manager Dan Faulkner said that, in order to comply with MDOT requirements, the village will need to remove trees over three inches in diameter along the planned pathway between Dunn Street and Nels Drive.

Due to deadlines for stages of the project, he said the tree removal will need to commence before the village receives bids for the path. In order to meet these deadlines, Faulkner said the village would need to contract an outside contractor for the tree removal. He said he had received a $9,900 bid from Dudiak Tree Service.

This would leave the possibility that the village could defer the project after committing to the tree removal.

Councilmember Lois Jones pointed out construction costs will likely continue to rise if the village does not begin the project this year. The council as a whole agreed that pedestrian safety along the highway is a concern. The route is currently used by residents of Three Oaks Estates and other nearby residences to reach local businesses.

Faulkner said a resident along the intended path sent a letter asking if the village would replace the removed trees with a fence to reduce highway noise when the trees no longer provide a buffer.

The council approved the tree cutting bid. Any decision on bids for construction on the pathway will be made at a future meeting after contractor bids have been submitted.

Village attorney Charles Hilmer has received an agreement on closing costs for the sale of the village lot at 114 N. Elm Street and should be able to move forward at the April meeting with an ordinance to confirm the private sale. The council agreed to negotiate the sale of the lot, used for public parking, to Bridget and Thad Verdun as the drivers need to encroach on the Verduns' adjacent property to use the parking lot.

Two companies responded to the village's request for proposals for trash removal and recycling services. Faulkner recommended the council approve the proposal from Lakeshore Recycling and Disposal, which is near the end of its current contract with the village.

Faulkner said the proposal from Lakeshore included yard waste removal during the summer months. Speaking for Lakeshore, Josh Workman said his company has specialized equipment for yard waste and can do the work at a lower cost than small municipalities can.

Village President Steve Graziano said in the past the council had heard complaints from residents about Lakeshore trucks leaking hydraulic fluid while collecting bins. Workman said the company had responded to those complaints with a new mechanics and said they comply with state environmental regulations.

The council approved the contract with Lakeshore.

In preparation for the River Valley Elementary Kindness Parade on March 23 and Oaktoberfest 5K on Sept. 19, the council approved road closures along both event routes.

Senior housing options in the village have been limited. Resident and former councilmember Darlene Heemstra said many senior residents, including herself, are looking for ways to downsize their homes while still living in the community.

She noted the proposed Crosby Oaks development had planned to have duplexes and standalone houses that would have been ideal for seniors, but the development ultimately did not break ground. She asked the council if there were ways to encourage similar developments to come to the village.

The council agreed to form a committee to look into the issue.

The State of Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE) mandates municipalities conduct a water system liability study to identify and manage drinking water systems, replacing materials as needed. Project Manager Andrew Rudd of Wightman and Associates said such a study would usually cost the village around $12,000, but recent improvements to the village water system compiled part of the required information so the village will be able to complete the study for $9,500.

Traditional copper landlines are being phased out nationwide and the village needs to upgrade its telephone and internet service to the administrative offices. After considering options, the council approved a three-year contract from Surf Internet that will upgrade the lines and allow the village to keep its current phone numbers.

The contract does not include service to the Police Department, which is located at 14 Maple Street, but Faulkner said he would look into contract options for the department.

The former Lions Club building at Watkins Park has been vacant for years. Dr. Gabriele Strohschen had previously approached the council about establishing a community center in the building. At the March meeting, she asked the council to support a grant application and commit funds to create the center.

She said the plan would provide a space for mentoring and enrichment. Building renovations are estimated to cost $900,000. Strohschen has identified two funding sources- a DNR grant and a congressionally directed spending program. Part of the DNR requirements require 25 percent matching funds, which she asked the council to commit to.

The council voted to approve a resolution to support the grant applications, and a resolution to match DNR funds.

Following up on an issue raised at the February meeting, Faulkner said the owners have plans to replace fixtures to direct light downwards to keep light from shining into neighboring residences.

He also told the council that Michigan Rural Water will hold a presentation on water rates at 9 a.m. April 10.

AEP has plans to reroute power lines near its substation. Rudd said the rerouting might provide the village with access if Linden Street is ever extended to the east. Resident Gene Svebakken complained that he had not received any notification about the planned reroute. Faulkner said AEP has not determined which direction it will reroute the lines. If new poles are placed on private property, he said, the utility will need to communicate with owners, but if poles are on the right of way, they will not be required to contact adjacent owners.

A water main along Hickory Street has a broken valve and currently dead ends. Rudd said he is trying to include work to repair the valve and create a service loop in the Hickory Street bridge project. He said the demolition of the old bridge is nearly done and work is slightly ahead of schedule.

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Chikaming Board updated on ConnectAlert

RECOMMENDS MEDICA 1 FUNDING MODEL

BY FRANCESCA SAGALA

Another way exists for those who wish to be alerted to time-sensitive Chikaming Township happenings through ConnectAlert.

At the Chikaming Township Board's Thursday, March 12, meeting, township supervisor David Bunte said that about 3,000 people are signed up on Chikaming Connect, which is an email list that sends out a quarterly newsletter. Chikaming ConnectAlert will provide reminders on time-sensitive business, such as key public meetings.

Those who are registered for Chikaming Connect will be automatically moved into ConnectAlert; however, Bunte said that the option exists for them to unsubscribe or choose with which list they want to be signed up.

Those who want to sign up for Chikaming Connect or ConnectAlert or both can visit chikamingtownship.org.

Those who are registered for Chikaming Connect will be automatically moved into ConnectAlert; however, Bunte said that the option exists for them to unsubscribe or choose with which list they want to be signed up.

Board members approved the recommendation of a funding model regarding Medic 1 Ambulance.

Fire chief Allen Weich said that the Medic 1 Board is in the process of trying to update its Articles of Incorporation, with the end goal of being able to have a formula that's not "necessarily based on per capita amount."

He added that a long-term goal is to be allowed to have "additional dials to be turned as far as how the organization is funded."

Medic 1 is a combination of 17 member owners, of which Chikaming is one, as well as seven contracted municipalities.

Last month, the board approved a budget about $500,000 higher than the previous one, for the fiscal year that began March 1. Weich said that the organization is looking to use those funds to address capital improvement projects over the next couple of years, such as buildings that would be large enough to accommodate the staff to sleep overnight and the addition of more staff.

Board members, who were presented with a variety of funding models, were recommending the one that was recommended by Weich, who sits on the Medic 1 Board.

Bunte said that the model "takes a number of different considerations" and that it's 60 percent on call volume, 30 percent on population and 10 percent on the municipalities' State Equalized Value (SEV).

"What it does, then, is it takes the whole pot, and it grounds it out a little bit more balanced across all the communities as opposed to taking a high percentage of one or the other," he said.

Chikaming would still see an increase in its annual cost of $48,000 to about $91,000, Bunte said.

The other municipalities are being asked to make their recommendations, with Medic 1 Board adopting the funding model.

Board members approved proceeding with an EMS Mutual Aid Agreement between Chikaming Township Fire Department and Medic 1. Weich said that part of the township having an EMS license through the state is having a mutual aid agreement and they had a formally established one with Lake Township two years ago; however, in February, they were notified that they would no longer be providing that service.

Board members approved budget amendments for fiscal year 2025-26 and adopted a resolution on Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2026-27.

Estimated General Fund revenues are $1,856,900. Estimated revenues for Road Maintenance Fund are $866,285; Public Safety, $1,820,172; Library, $306,620; Building Fund, $350,391; Water Fund, $3,127,450; and Sewer Fund, $3,824,293.

Board members approved opening the public comment period for the first draft of the master plan and confirming that the Master Plan Draft Meeting at 6 p.m. March 24 will be the first public comment public meeting date.

As of Oct. 1, Bunte said MDOT will no longer be able to fund the current structure of Berrien County transit, which is Twin Cities Area Transportation Authority (TCATA), Berrien County Bus and DART (Niles Dial-A-Ride Transportation).

The way to save the current funding model with MDOT is to "create a transit authority under the county's tutelage" by Oct. 1, Bunte said, which would need the support of "a good majority of the communities" in the county for anything to move forward. With an authority in place, MDOT would fund a funding gap three to four years into transition and then it would be taken slowly over by the county, Bunte said.

While a resolution in support of the potential authority wasn't supplied in time for that night's meeting, Bunte said a special meeting may be held when it's available.

Board members approved hiring Allie Canfield and Andrew Teague as part-time firefighters/EMT Basic.

From the Bleachers

COLUMN BY KURT MARGGRAF IN CHICAGO

The sporting world is buzzing.Close to equal attention is being paid to football, baseball, and basketball, with basketball leading the way.

March Madness is upon us and even those who hadn't paid a lot of attention to college basketball, myself included, for most of the season are now watching closely so we can compete with those who have followed all season long.

Many sports fans love tradition, and filling out your brackets, trying to figure out which, of the sixty eight participants, will eventually be crowned champions, has been going on for years.

This happens often in companies throughout the country, and probably now throughout the world, and productivity slips as people gather around the water cooler to discuss the results of that day's games.

The games last weekend were really fun to watch, filled with great players and close games, and enthusiastic fans. Michigan, Michigan State, Purdue and Illinois will be participating, and all four will have a fighting chance. As always, the games this month will be fun to watch.

Turning to baseball, the World Baseball Classic is nearing its completion.

For those of you that are not following, every four years countries from around the world field teams and compete against one another with nothing but national pride on the line.

Major League Baseball interrupts spring training so that their best players can go and compete. Japan won the series four years ago, but lost in the quarterfinals to Venezuela this time around. T

he semifinals were half way in the books when my deadline was approaching, so I don't know the winner of the Venezuela versus Italy game but I do know that the United States hung on to beat the Dominican Republic 2-1 in the other semi final game. There were a couple of bad balls that were called strikes to help the U.S. win and I won't be surprised if robot umpires are used the next time around.

Unfortunately, Cub slugger Seiya Suzuki injured his knee against Venezuela and it is not yet known how severe the injury is. Cub fans can only hope that the injury is not serious.

On the NFL front, billions of dollars were spent on free agents, but the Bears resisted the temptation to overspend and put their future in jeopardy. In my opinion, the team should be graded about a "B" so far this off season.

They didn't make any splash moves, like signing but they did fill some holes. A pass rusher, a safety, a wide receiver, offensive lineman, and linebacker should try to be addressed in the upcoming college draft.

After the success the team had last year, the general manager and coach should be given every opportunity to construct the roster as they see fit. The coming season should be a great one.

Jim Bouton said, "A ballplayer spends a good piece of his life gripping a baseball, and in the end it turns out that it was the other way around all the time."

Be kind. Talk to you next week. Peace, love, and happiness.

I'm tired of hearing about money, money, money, money, money. I just want to play the game, drink Pepsi, wear Reebok. *— Shaquille O'Neal*

Raiders lose in district semi finals in girls basketball

BY STAN MADDUX

The Red Arrow Raiders were eliminated from the district tournament in girls' high school basketball after advancing to the semi-finals.

The Raiders lost 57-22 on March 4 to Brandywine, the defending district champion vying for its third consecutive regional title.

"Brandywine is an elite machine. They were aggressive right off the bat," said Raiders Head Coach Jason Alexander.

The Raiders finished the season at 7-12 but won the Berrien Cass St. Joseph Conference title in their division.

The overall record wasn't the greatest but most of those losses were to much stronger teams from larger schools in the upper division of their conference.

"All in all, over the course of the year I thought our girls played pretty good basketball," he said.

Alexander has reason to be optimistic for next season with all, but one player expected to return and talent to draw from at the junior varsity level.

Among the returning players are Emma Seifert, Laney Strother, Shyann Spaulding and Addison Lynch, who were all named first team all-conference in their division.

"I expect big things for us next year," he said.

TICKS ARE TARGETING FAMILIES.

The ticks that spread Lyme disease are tiny (often smaller than the head of a pin) but the problem of Lyme disease is big—and growing. There are 300,000 projected cases each year, and if left untreated, Lyme can lead to arthritis, facial paralysis, and even memory and concentration problems.

It's time for us to target Lyme disease.

That means checking for ticks when you've been outside and seeing a doctor if you experience the symptoms of Lyme disease, which can include joint pain, flu-like symptoms, fever, fatigue, or sometimes a bullseye-shaped rash. Set your sights on stopping Lyme disease.

Learn how you can target Lyme disease at
TargetLyme.org

A message from the Steven and Alexandra Cohen Foundation

STEVEN & ALEXANDRA COHEN FOUNDATION

David's Delicatessen celebrates 16 years of corned beef

BY FRANCESCA SAGALA

For the 16th year, guests chowed down on corned beef from across the country while supporting a great cause at David's Delicatessen's Corned Beef-off in New Buffalo Sunday, March 15.

This year, guests could sample corned beef from 20 different suppliers. For the sixth year in a row, Burn 'Em Brewing in Michigan City was declared the winner.

Guests washed their meals down with beer, wine, soft drinks, and pours from the False Front's massive Irish whiskey collection.

Proceeds from this year's event went to Harbor Country Mission, a nonprofit that, through its resource center and related programs, distributes clothing, furniture, appliances, household goods, and food at low or no cost to families across Berrien County.

Founder and board treasurer David Heyn said that they're raising money for a new parking lot at their warehouse at 9600 Red Arrow Highway in Bridgman. Per a press release, the project encompasses approximately 12,000 square feet of asphalt paving, site preparation, grading, drainage improvements, and ADA-compliant accessible parking striping. The total estimated project cost is $60,000, which the Mission is raising through individual donors, local businesses, civic organizations, and foundation grants

Heyn added that they've received final steps of approval to pave the lot.

"It's a place where people come to get help and if they can't get help through our parking lot, they can't get the help they need," he said.

Seeing as how the Mission is about community and "helping each other out," Harbor Country Mission Executive Director Kelly Boersma said that day's event was the "perfect match" for their parking lot fundraiser.

"We really want to be sure everyone has full access to our facility, whether they're donating or coming to thrift or coming to get some things they need, we want to make sure it's barrier free," she said.

Guests line up for their samples of corned beef

David's co-proprietor Joe Lindsay distributes corned beef samples to young diners

David's co-proprietor Emma Brewster greets guests

Guests enjoy corned beef on the back patio

David's co-proprietor Joe Lindsay serves corned beef to guests

Rosie Brewster chows down on corned beef in the kitchen area

Scott Ferguson and Chris Walsh are ready to enjoy corned beef

1 in 7 children faces hunger.

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PUBLIC NOTICES

NEW BUFFALO AREA SCHOOLS IS ACCEPTING STUDENTS FOR THE BISON BEGINNERS PRE-KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM AND KINDERGARTEN STUDENTS FOR THE 2026-2027 SCHOOL YEAR.

It is helpful to know how many students we will have as we begin planning for the 2026-2027 school year.

If you believe your child will qualify for either the Bison Beginners pre-kindergarten program or for kindergarten, please contact the elementary school office at 269-469-6060 so we can make sure your student is on our enrollment list. You can also email the elementary school's administrative assistant

Jenna Wendel at jwendel@nbas.org. Please contact the office by Monday, April 6, 2026. You will need to include the following information: child's name, birth date, parent/guardian name, address, phone number and email address.

BISON BEGINNERS

Parents/guardians that have children who will be four years old on or before September 1, 2026 are able to register their child for the Bison Beginners pre-kindergarten program. The program offers both half-day (a.m. only) or full-day sessions. Enrollment is limited to 25 students.

KINDERGARTEN

Parents/guardians with students that will be five years old on or before September 1, 2026 are able to register their child for the full-day kindergarten program.

SCHOOL OF CHOICE AND TUITION

If you do not reside in the New Buffalo Area Schools district but do live in Michigan, you are welcome to apply for the School of Choice program. Tuition is also an available enrollment option for students living out-of-state. Information and applications for both programs are on our district's website: www.nbas.org/o/nbas/page/school-of-choice-and-tuition-students.

HEARING/VISION/DENTAL SCREENING

Pre-kindergarten and kindergarten students planning to attend New Buffalo Elementary for the 2026-2027 school year will be able to have a hearing, vision and dental screening performed by the Berrien County Health Department on Tuesday, April 28, 2026 from 12:30-3:30 pm at New Buffalo Elementary.

Appointments (15 minutes) are required - please call or email the school office to schedule. This screening is required by the state of Michigan for kindergarten and highly encouraged by our district for pre-kindergarten.

Please bring your student's birth certificate (original or a copy), student's immunization record and parent/guardian picture ID.

If you will not be attending the health screening on April 28, please contact the Berrien County Health Department at 269-926-7121, extension 5293 to schedule an appointment or visit their website for more information: Dental Hearing & Vision Screening | Berrien County, MI

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A Writer's Life...

DURING THE GOLDEN AGE OF TELEVISION ANIMATION

BY JACK OLESKER

The Encino Tar Pits

I'm not a fan of speaking or writing ill of anyone, and that's why you will rarely see me doing that in my columns. But if I'm going to tell you about my experiences during The Golden Age of Television Animation then I need to tell you about the ugly and the bad, along with the good.

As Kevin led me from his own office, I thought it odd that he hadn't situated Jeff in the Writers' Wing where he could meet and hang out with other writers. Instead Kevin installed him into an office next to his own, as if shielding him.

Kevin knocked on the door. Jeff was looking at a file from a file cabinet when Kevin opened the door. Jeff shoved the file back into the cabinet and closed it quickly. He offered a forced smile as Kevin introduced us.

Jeff was tall, blonde, not heavyset but big-boned. He sat in his chair, anything but at ease. I understood that. He was new to DIC.

After the introductions, he said, "We've got a lot to do. Let's get into the characters." He was echoing what Kevin had already told me. But it was the way he said it that gave me pause, like we were going to be performing slow and precise autopsies.

I decided to cut him some slack and see how this all worked out.

Let me get this out of the way right now. I didn't have anything against Jeff. He seemed like a nice enough fella. If I ran into him in a bar I'd probably hoist a couple of Guinnesses with him and spend a pleasant hour chatting about football. But this wasn't a bar and we weren't chatting about football.

My next two weeks were agonizing. Like an extended slow motion scene in a movie, my life and 'work' – such as it was -- now moving at a glacial pace, at least for me. We would always meet in his office. We'd start out talking about a certain Predicaments character. As soon as I'd suggest I write a two or three-page bio about them, as I would for a series bible, Jeff would slam on the brakes, holding up his hands and offering a dismayed, "Whoooooa..." And what would follow would be any of half a dozen different reasons (excuses) why I shouldn't write the bio. He'd crow, "We have to figure out how the character interacts with others." "We need to know their motivation." Or "We need to forecast how they will act if this (or that or the other) happens."

It was the same when it came to something as basic as a location. If we were 'brainstorming' about the Flatt Mansion's living room, I'd have to endure a grueling, endless dissection about the significance of a Tiffany lamp or a collection of leather-bound books on a certain bookshelf or why a collection of leather-bound books wasn't on a certain bookshelf. He'd apply the same circular logic to any subject, inevitably ending up right back where the discussion had first begun, with nothing resolved...and nothing written. And I mean not one single word written. (Are you starting to get the idea?)

I know I write fast (and well). I also know not everyone writes fast. But I was starting to feel like Seabiscuit caught in a tar pit -- only this tar pit was located in Encino, California, right in the midst of DIC's studio.

I was rapidly nearing the end of my rope.

HOROSCOPE

MARCH 19-25, 2026

AS INTERPRETED BY SANDY "STAR" BENDT

ARIES MARCH 21—APRIL 19

There is a lot of energy hitting your sign now. One of the energies is about limitations and boundaries which is teaching you how to get by on less. Another energy is about emotions and connections to the other worlds of experience which is teaching you how to discern fact from fiction.

TAURUS APRIL 20—MAY 20

Follow your instincts to pull back and refresh your spirit and recharge now. This is the time to rely on your own intuition and gut feelings, when making decisions or working on projects. It's good to have friends to have fun with or talk to but when it comes to making decisions, do it alone.

GEMINI MAY 21—JUNE 21

It is important that you realize how interconnected everything is and small changes in one area, can lead to big changes somewhere else. So, make your moves with causation in mind. Be aware that the best actions now are more on the mental level, where they can be well planned prior to execution.

CANCER JUNE 22—JULY 22

There is a lot of positive and exciting energy coming your way this week. Your career and public image are lighting up with greater responsibility and increasing visibility. It is a great time to take initiative and start branching out towards new clients or new areas of development.

LEO JULY 23—AUGUST 22

You may feel some push back or limitations from others on what you can do this week but the it is time to push past those limitations and propel yourself forward with gusto. The energy and motivation you need resides within you. This is the time to get things done for yourself, by yourself.

VIRGO AUGUST 23—SEPTEMBER 22

It's a great time to focus in on the things and people that mean the most. Don't get caught up in social scripts or superficial situations. If you don't want to be somewhere, get out of there. Know that when something feels off or you have no motivation to do it, It's time to move away from it.

LIBRA SEPTEMBER 23—OCTOBER 22

There will be a lot to get done this week and it is important to lighten things up with humor particularly if working with a partner. You may not be ale to see them clearly and might not realize when they are at their limit or struggling but the opportunity is there to really connect through a project.

SCORPIO OCTOBER 23—NOVEMBER 21

This is the time to get serious about your health and wellness routines. Put more effort into nourishing your body and making the most out of what you currently have. When you put your heart and focus on yourself, you won't be afraid to advocate for yourself and get the expertise you need.

SAGITTARIUS NOVEMBER 22—DECEMBER 21

There is a very spontaneous vibe coming your way. This is the time to have fun and engage in activities that make you feel young at heart. Do things that connect you to a time in your life where you felt free and full of creative energy. This is an opportunity to be dramatic in a fun way.

CAPRICORN DECEMBER 22—JANUARY 19

There will be a lot of projects to complete at home this week and the energy coming your way will help you get in touch with what you need out of your space. Whether you are making your space more accommodating to visitors or creating a more productive workspace, the method to do it will appear.

AQUARIUS JANUARY 20—FEBRUARY 18

Use humor when making your point or delivering bad news this week. People are not always prepared for the things you bring to the table but the things you share usually shine a light on problems they are experiencing and that is what makes them uncomfortable. It's not you. It's their insecurities.

PISCES FEBRUARY 19—MARCH 20

Keep your focus on your money and financial situation this week. Don't rest on your laurels. This is the time to move on purchases and securing the items you need to make more money and stability in the future. Whether it is purchasing equipment or land, make your moves now, while the stars are in your favor.

There are four basic human needs; food, sleep, sex and revenge. *— Banksy*

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Sudoku

Fill in the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains the numbers 1 through 9.

	3	9	7			1		8
		7		6			3	
2	8						6	
		1	6	9			5	
	7	5						9
	1					2		
			9		4	7		6
		8				3		

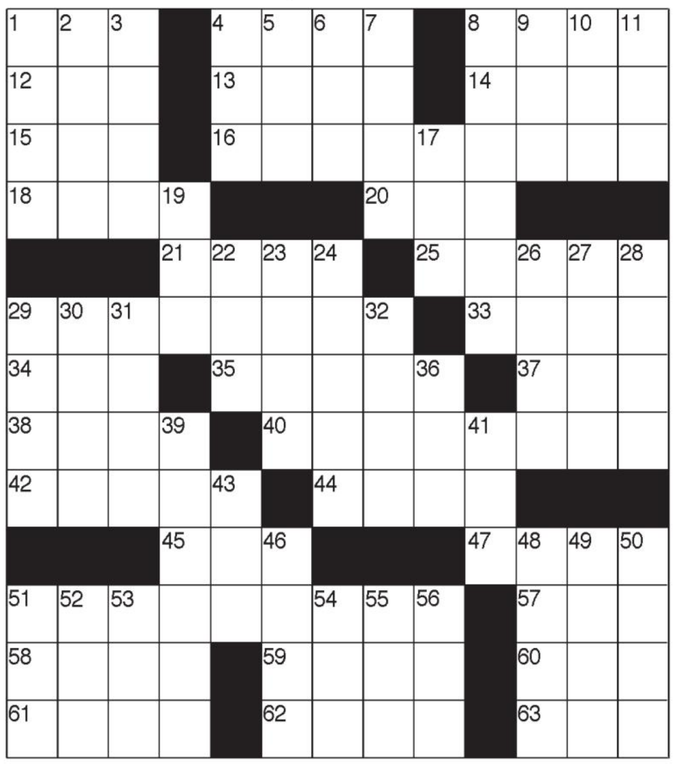
CROSSWORD PUZZLE

ACROSS

1 Instrument Landing System (abbr.)
4 Sliced cabbage
8 Swabs
12 Day of the week (abbr.)
13 Hit on the head
14 Noun-forming (suf.)
15 Centigram (abbr.)
16 Stench
18 Chin. dynasty
20 No way!
21 Policemen
25 Keyboard musical instrument
29 Ivory color
33 Regrets
34 Length over all (abbr.)
35 Delay
37 Dative (abbr.)
38 Government (abbr.)
40 Cerine
42 Fictitious name
44 Coral islands
45 Pluck wool by hand
47 Use swear words
51 Dodge
57 Pan American Union (abbr.)
58 Amer. Civil Liberties Union (abbr.)
59 Bush
60 Tons per day (abbr.)
61 Leaves of water lilies
62 Move quickly
63 Office of Strategic Services (abbr.)

DOWN

1 Restless desire
2 Affectation
3 Half (pref.)
4 Standard cubic foot (abbr.)
5 Love (Scot.)
6 Atl. standard time (abbr.)
7 Furze
8 Monument stone
9 Not multifold
10 Personal computers
11 His (Fr.)
17 Dip
19 Alternating continuous waves (abbr.)
22 Exclamations of delight
23 Pocket bread
24 Hunting game stealthily
26 German auto
27 Clean
28 Bone: Gr.
29 Saint of the Russ. Orthodox Church
30 Deception
31 Hexagonal tiles
32 She (Fr.)
36 Ballad
39 Ankle
41 Nat'l Security Council (abbr.)
43 Bean
46 Cricket field parts
48 Till (2 words)
49 Drains
50 Beer
51 Father
52 Fiddler crab genus
53 Sealed (abbr.)
54 Office of Economic Development (abbr.)
55 Money of Anglo-Saxon England
56 Explosive



Public Notice:
Your right to know!

for

PUBLIC NOTICES are an effective way for agencies of government to make official announcements.

State law requires these notices be printed in newspapers.

Nearly two-thirds of active Michigan voters* would be concerned if government placed these notices on websites because important information could be concealed from the public.

* EPIC-MRA 2011

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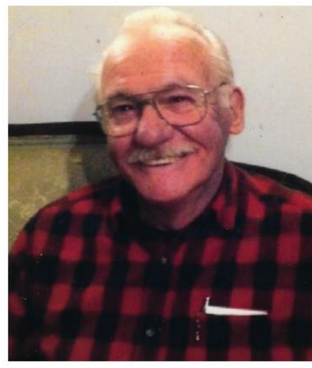
OBITUARIES



Lawrence "Larry" Lee McGinnis, Sr.

1941-2026

Lawrence "Larry" Lee McGinnis, Sr., 85, formerly of New Buffalo, now of LaPorte, IN, passed away surrounded by his many family members at the Northwest Health Center in LaPorte, IN, on Friday – March 13, 2026. Arrangements have been entrusted to Sommerfeld Chapel – 15 North Barton St., New Buffalo, MI.

Larry was born on Feb. 17, 1941 in Michigan City, IN, to the late Joseph and Alice (Pieffer) McGinnis.

Larry served his country while in the U.S. Marine Corps Reserves from 1962 – 1989 as a Master Gunnery Sgt. He married Margaret Ribbe on March 7, 1964.

Larry was a loving husband, father, and friend. Larry initiated the first Toys For Tots Program in Michiana and continued being involved for over 25 years before passing it onto another veteran.

Larry was also a member of the American Legion Post #169 in New Buffalo, MI for 39 years. Larry enjoyed roller skating - where he met his wife, and hosting family reunions.

He loved to hear people laugh from the many jokes he would share. Especially his "How Do You Sell a Chicken" joke.

Larry is survived by his wife of over 62 years – Margaret "Marge" McGinnis; children – Lawrence "Lee" (Jacqueline) McGinnis, Jr of Interlochen, MI and Trish (Mark) Basinger of LaPorte, IN; grandchildren – Ashley (Josh) Scott, Samantha (Johnny) Davis, JacobBasinger and Brett McGinnis; and great grandchildren – Lincoln Davis, Wynnie Davis,Rose Davis, Bruce Davis and Charlotte Scott; and many nieces and nephews. He is preceded in death by brothers – Joseph, Jack, Earl, Robert and Charles; and a sister Edna.

Visitation with the family is on Friday – March 20 from 6:00-8:00pm EDT at Sommerfeld Chapel in New Buffalo. A Celebration of Life Service will be on Sat. March 19, 11:00am EDT, at the Lighthouse Village Church of God – 18459 US 12, New Buffalo, MI, with Pastor Anthony Fields officiating. Burial will be at a later date at Ft. Custer National Cemetery in Augusta, MI.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Lighthouse Village Church of God. Friends wishing to send condolences to the family may do so at www.sommerfeldchapel.com.

Grade school students learn about farming during Ag Days

BY STAN MADDUX

Over 900 school children in LaPorte County learned more about where their food comes from and the work involved in getting it to their dinner tables.

This occurred Wednesday and Thursday during the annual Ag Days put on by LaPorte County Farm Bureau.

The children all in the fourth grade were bused from their respective schools to the event inside the Community Building at the LaPorte County Fairgrounds.

They spent ten minutes at each of the nearly one dozen stations learning about different things like milk production and the process involved in food reaching consumers from start to finish.

Dairy Farmer Frank Minich informed the students just one dairy cow drinks the equivalent of a "bathtub full of water" every day and can produce as much as 10 to 12 gallons of milk over a 24-hour period.

Minich said it takes about eight hours to milk all of his 800 head of Holstein cows and nearly five hours to feed them at his farm near Kingsbury.

The milking and feeding are done twice a day.

Minich also revealed he uses gummy bears from a candy factory in Merrillville in his grain mixture for the cows as a nutritional supplement, a longstanding practice in the dairy industry to stretch feed supplies.

He said the gummy bears are made available to him because they didn't make the candy maker's grade for quality.

However, Minich said the discarded gummy bears are less costly than traditional feed and contain sugars that mirror the ones in the corn included in the grain mixture.

"It's a smart business move for us to do that," he said.

He also said a few calves are born every day on his farm.

"Baby cows are always cute," quipped one student.

Farmer Jeff Mitzner of Wanatah played a video showing how 25 tons of freshly harvested cucumbers are loaded into trucks and shipped to processors who turn them into pickles.

"They are going to be put in a can or a jar like that for you to use to buy at the grocery store," he said.

The video also displayed how tomatoes are harvested by machines then put through a shaker to remove any rocks or other debris from the plants before they're shipped for processing.

People riding on the harvesting machines remove any bad tomatoes from the crop, said Mitzner, who raises mostly corn, soybeans, wheat and cattle.

Paul Herrold, who raises primarily corn and soybeans on about 3,500 acres in the Westville area, said the students in his presentations seemed most surprised that flour comes from grinding wheat.

He also told how his soybeans a few years ago were taken to an elevator in Union Mills for shipment to China.

"Literally, crops grown here in La Porte County could end up anywhere in the entire world," he said.

LaPorte County Farm Bureau President Mark Parkman said the event is an important learning experience since a vast majority of school children nowadays don't live on a farm.

Teacher Linda Nelson, who brought her fourth-grade students from Kingsford Heights Elementary School, agreed.

"We are surrounded by farmland but I don't think they really understand what that entails and what it takes to maintain and run a farm. It's a great opportunity for them to get that," she said.

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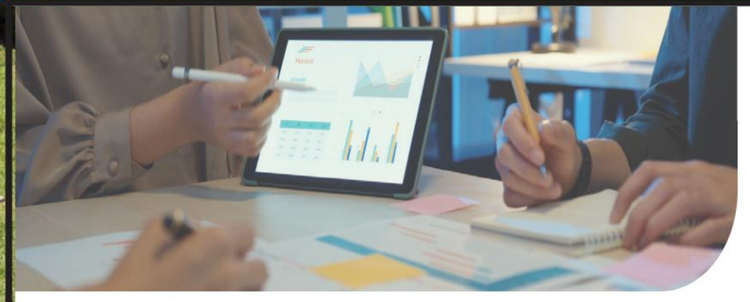
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To Your Health

COLUMN BY KAREN EDWARDS ND

CHANNELS OF ELIMINATION

Our bodies are exposed to toxins, pollutants and harmful substances on a daily basis. In order to maintain wellbeing, our bodies detoxify and eliminate these substances and wastes regularly. Well, let's say they are supposed to.

We have four natural detoxification pathways. If we give our bodies what they need, we go through detox on a regular basis. Unfortunately, due to the Standard American Diet (SAD) of sugars, chemicals, processed foods and a sedate lifestyle, these channels get congested, and sometimes fail to work at all. When this happens, our bodies move into states of DIS-ease.

These four channels are meant to eliminate dangerous accumulated toxins through Urination, Respiration, Perspiration and Defecation. This happens through the kidneys, lungs, skin and bowel. They each perform daily miracles when we keep them in good health.

I write this over and over. 'We are each responsible for our own health'. If you don't keep these channels of elimination open naturally, they will find a way of eliminating regardless, to keep us alive. I call them our chimneys. We all know the symptoms of our bodies venting through illness. This is natures way of opening these eliminative channels when we fail to take care of them ourselves through correct diet and lifestyle.

Sickness is actually your body ridding toxins that have embedded deeply within the organs. When you get sick, these symptoms usually occur. You get a deep cough when a cold comes on. This helps stir up and remove mucous from the lungs. (Respiration.) A fever develops and profuse sweat releases out of your pores. (Perspiration.) You often get diarrhea that helps clear out the toxins quickly from the bowel. (Defecation.) and finally,if you are drinking enough liquids, you can aid the kidneys in releasing their fluids. (Urination.)

If we take care of our bodies and are respectful with what we put into it, our bodies don't have to develop the cold and flu to allow this venting. In my teachings, you will often hear me say that "the cold is the cure." Because it does clean out all the channels of elimination.

Support your body's channels of elimination and keep from getting sick so often.

Upon waking, drink 24 oz. of lukewarm water. Add 2 Tablespoons lemon juice. Sip this water over the next hour prior to eating or drinking anything else. This will hydrate and alkalize your body and kickstart these organs responsibilities. Let your first meal be nutrient dense living food that is full of fiber. Fruit is a great breakfast. Your first meal is breaking a long fast. This is why it is called BREAK-fast. Make it valuable to your bodies healing needs.

If you are able, take a quick walk. Swinging your arms. This helps move the food through your colon and activates all the organs of elimination. If you can't walk do some jumping jacks. Rid processed foods. Drink more water. Do deep breathing exercises.

Become your own healer. Support these channels of elimination and watch your health transform.

Disclaimer: Everything here is for nutritional education and is not meant to diagnose, treat prevent or cure. See your doctor when you have questions.

PET OF THE WEEK

BRICKIE

Brickie wants you. Literally, you. She is a fantastic cat. She wants you, and as a vaccintated 12-year-old spayed "kitty"...she wants your home. Brickie has some issues, so she'd do well in a single, quiet home. She does love toys. Once she's going, she will go. Ask about Brickie, if you'd like to make part of your home..

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1	5	7	8	6	2	9	3	4
2	8	4	1	3	9	5	6	7
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I	L	S	■	S	L	A	W	■	M	O	P	S		
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Rios debuts expanded New Buffalo location

A NEW CHAPTER

BY FRANCESCA SAGALA

One could say that it was meant to be that Rios Mexican Grill in New Buffalo would someday put down fresh roots at 603 East Buffalo St.

Through talks with the owner of the building at that location, Alberto Rios said his family learned that his father, Pedro, was "really interested" in purchasing it before passing away in 2019.

"Fast forward to after Covid: We looked into this place and we decided to pull the trigger on it," Alberto said.

Guests were welcomed into Rios' long-awaited "grand reopening" at the location Saturday, March 14.

The new location features a dine-in option, as well as outdoor seating on a fenced-in porch area in the warmer weather months and an expanded drive-through and parking lot.

According to Alberto's sister, Marisol, the location has a 48-seating capacity.

"We have so much space now to be able to give our customers a good place to sit down instead of having to order outside," she said.

After 26 years, she said they "outgrew" the former space at 901 West Buffalo St.

"It was too small for us, and it was hard for our cooks during summertime – it just got too busy, we needed a bigger kitchen, and so we decided it was time to upgrade to a bigger space," Marisol said.

She and Alberto said that the kitchen in the building, which housed the former Buffalo Bill's, merely needed a "cosmetic lift."

The same tasty staples that customers have come to expect at the Mexican restaurant are still there: Soft or flour shell or crispy tacos, with chicken or beef or other fillings; quesadillas, burritos, burritos and nacho bowls; tortas and a variety of sides, such as beans and chips and guacamole. The plan is to incorporate new menu items gradually, with Marisol adding that they had recently introduced "very delicious" homemade tamales made by their mother.

New items include pastires, such as flan, tres leches, parfaits and traditional Jello, and four Agua Frescas every day.

The location will be maintaining its grab and go concept. Those who are in a rush and don't want to wait in line can now order at one of the self-serve kiosks.

In addition to New Buffalo, Rios also has a location in Michigan City, which Marisol said is next in line for an upgrade.

They still have plans for the former New Buffalo one, which is "temporarily" closed.

Plans for the new location include bringing back the famous taco eating contest, which featured 25 tacos and two tons of rice, the open mic nights and a Latin farmers market in the parking lot.

"We're definitely excited to bring more things on now that we have the space to do it and also, we look forward to doing something with our old location - so a lot of plans for his year, absolutely," Alberto said.

The family-owned business is currently run by Alberto, Marisol, their other sister, Esmeralda Garrett and their mother, Maria.

The restaurant's roots can be traced to 1995, when Pedro and Maria, along with their sister and brother-in-law, opened El Amigo Pancho in Sister Lakes, Michigan, which sold "everything from fresh farm produce to everyday necessities," per a plaque outside the restaurant.

Soon, Pedro and Maria, who were former farm workers, added a kitchen for traditional, homemade meals. In 1999, they sold the business and Pedro opened El Rio Grande, a restaurant in Stevensville. After a few months, that closed. Undeterred, Pedro and his family spotted a building for lease after driving to New Buffalo in early 2000. After a quick tour, that very day, they made an agreement with the building's owner, Dino Fatorous.

Thanks to the community's support, Pedro managed to scrape together $500 and purchase ingredients to open the small taco shop.

Having only been bystanders during their father's various business ventures, Alberto said his siblings were faced with quite the learning curve.

"Our whole lives, we saw how he opened up restaurants, but we were never the ones doing it, so for us this was a definite challenge so a lot of hoops, a lot of learning - but now, we got it figured out," he said.

As stated on the plaque, the Rios family is "proud to have established our roots in New Buffalo in 2000, and we are committed to honoring Pedro's memory by cherishing and appreciating the community, just as he did."

"We're really thankful for everyone who's been supportive of us - the community, for the past 26 years, has been there for us," Alberto said.

Currently, Rios in New Buffalo is open Monday through Sunday from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. For more information visit riosnb.com or follow Rios Mexican Grill on Instagram and Facebook.

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